

INSIGHTS

3.9%
October
Unemployment Rate

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S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

Business Intelligence Department

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Employment Level Sets Another Record in October

The number of individuals working across the state set a new record in October, and the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained unchanged at 3.9 percent for the month. Over the past five months, the state's unemployment rate has remained in the 3.9 to 4 percent range, levels not seen in nearly 17 years.

The number of employed increased by 1,830 to 2,234,600 people, while unemployment declined by 251 to 91,091, the fewest unemployed since February 2001. The state's labor force increased by 1,579 to 2,325,691 people.

Since October of 2016, employment has grown by 38,453, while unemployment decreased by 10,681. This has increased the labor force by 27,772.

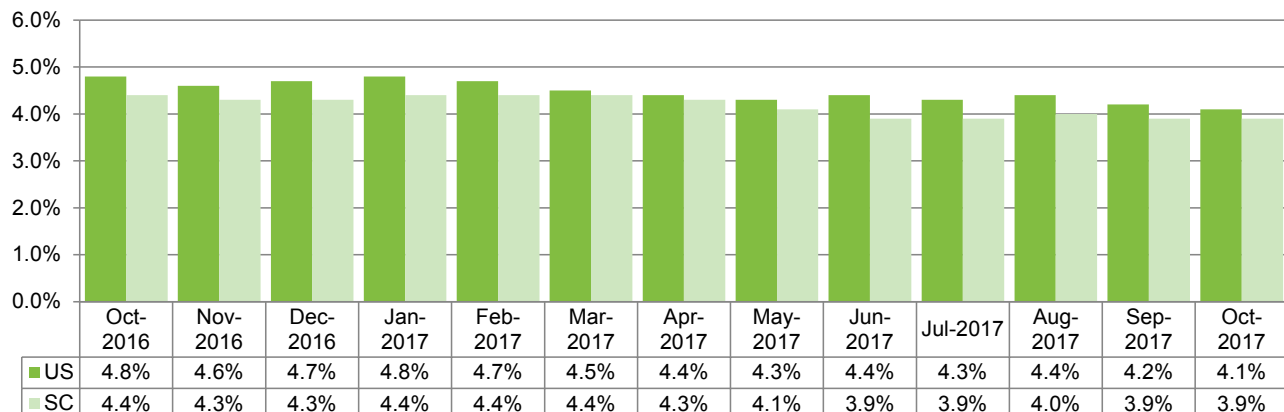
Nationally, the unemployment rate edged down to 4.1 percent in October from 4.2 percent in September.



Economic Indicators October - Seasonally Adjusted (SA)

	United States	S.C.
Labor Force	160,381,000	2,325,691
Employed	153,861,000	2,234,600
Unemployed	6,520,000	91,091
Unemp. Rate	4.1%	3.9%

South Carolina vs U.S. Unemployment Rate
October 2016 - October 2017



Insights is prepared in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The current month's estimates are preliminary, while all previous data are subject to revision. All estimates are projected from a first quarter 2016 benchmark. To subscribe to *Insights*, please email bidcustomerservice@dew.sc.gov or to provide feedback please click on the [BID Customer Feedback Form](#).



South Carolina ranked 23rd lowest of 50 states and D.C. in October

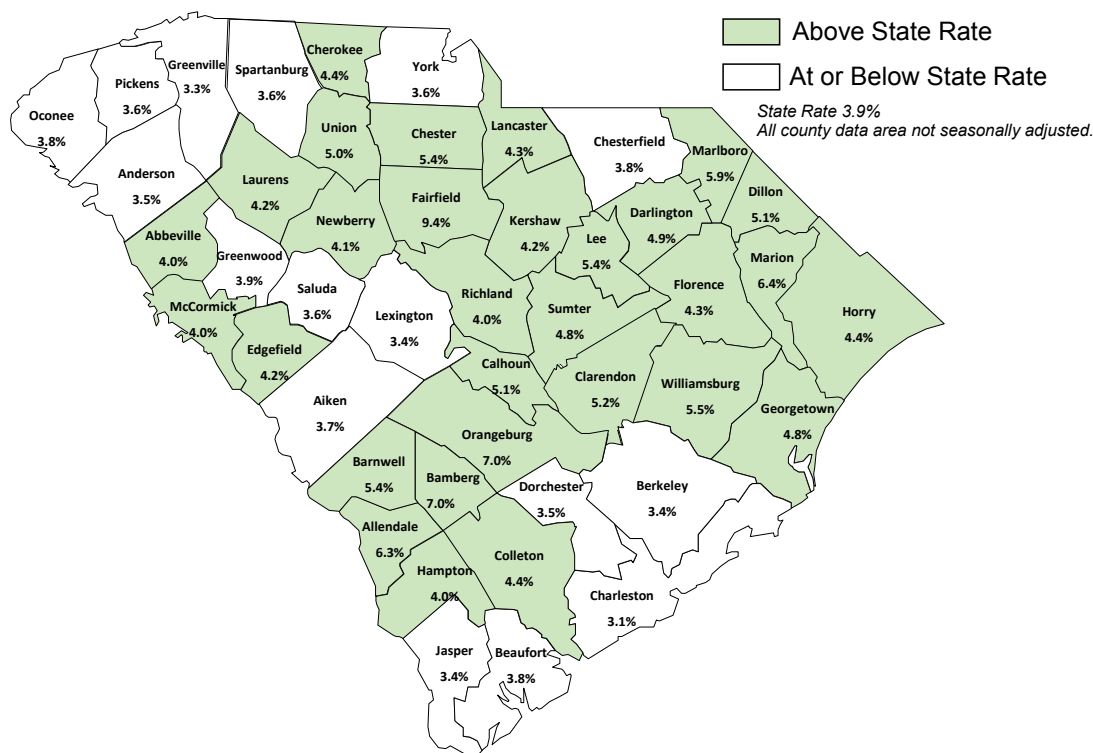
Unemployment rates were lower in October in 12 states, higher in one state, and stable in 37 states and the District of Columbia. Twenty-three states had jobless rate decreases from a year earlier, two states and the District had increases, and 25 states had little or no change. In October, South Carolina ranked 23rd lowest out of 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Nonfarm payroll employment increased in nine states in October 2017, decreased in three states, and was essentially unchanged in 38 states and the District of Columbia. Over the year, 27 states added nonfarm payroll jobs, and 23 states and the District were essentially unchanged. The largest percentage gain occurred in Nevada (+2.8 percent), followed by Utah (+2.7 percent) and Texas (+2.6 percent) from a year ago.

October unemployment rates by county

Not seasonally adjusted county unemployment rate estimates were mixed in October as the not seasonally statewide unemployment rate edged upward. Overall, county unemployment rates ranged from 9.4 percent in Fairfield County to 3.1 percent in Charleston County during the month. Driving the latest movement upward in Fairfield County's unemployment rate was the recent closure of the V.C. Summer nuclear construction site.

Over the month, employment was modestly lower across 42 of 46 counties. Driven by seasonal factors related to tourism, continued declines in employment levels were marked in Horry and Beaufort counties. Additionally, notable employment declines were seen Spartanburg and Florence counties.



Hawaii	2.2
North Dakota	2.5
Colorado	2.7
Nebraska	2.7
New Hampshire	2.7
Idaho	2.9
Vermont	2.9
Iowa	3.0
Tennessee	3.0
Minnesota	3.3
Utah	3.3
Wisconsin	3.4
Maine	3.5
Missouri	3.5
South Dakota	3.5
Alabama	3.6
Arkansas	3.6
Florida	3.6
Kansas	3.6
Virginia	3.6
Massachusetts	3.7
Maryland	3.8
Indiana	3.9
Montana	3.9
South Carolina	3.9
Texas	3.9
North Carolina	4.1
United States	4.1
Rhode Island	4.2
Wyoming	4.2
Georgia	4.3
Oregon	4.3
Oklahoma	4.4
Arizona	4.5
Connecticut	4.5
Michigan	4.5
Washington	4.5
Pennsylvania	4.7
Delaware	4.8
Louisiana	4.8
New York	4.8
California	4.9
Illinois	4.9
Mississippi	4.9
New Jersey	4.9
Kentucky	5.0
Nevada	5.0
Ohio	5.1
West Virginia	5.1
New Mexico	6.1
District of Columbia	6.6
Alaska	7.2

October 2017

Highest County Unemployment Rates		Lowest County Unemployment Rates	
Fairfield	9.4%	Charleston	3.1%
Bamberg	7.0%	Greenville	3.3%
Orangeburg	7.0%	Berkeley	3.4%
Marion	6.4%	Jasper	3.4%
Allendale	6.3%	Lexington	3.4%

October 2017

Economic Indicators Average Hours & Earnings		
	United States (SA)	S.C. (Unadj.)
Manufacturing		
Avg. Weekly Earnings	\$1,097.57	\$838.33
Avg. Weekly Hours	41.0	43.8
Avg. Hourly Wages	\$26.77	\$19.14

South Carolina seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment trend for October

In October 2017, seasonally adjusted, nonfarm payrolls increased by 10,100 over the month to a record level of 2,102,500.

The increase in employment was primarily due to growth in Leisure and Hospitality (+4,500) and Professional and Business Services (+3,500). During October, additional job counts occurred in Other Services (+2,300); Education and Health Services (+1,800); Government (+1,300); Construction (+200); and Information (+100).

Industries reporting declines during the same period were the Manufacturing (-2,200); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (-800); and Financial Activities (-600) sectors.

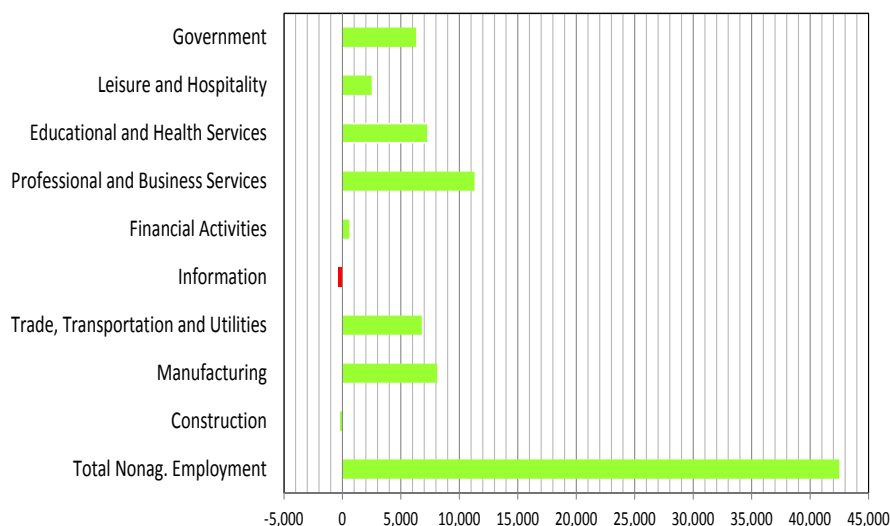
From October 2016 to October 2017, South Carolina's economy added 42,500 seasonally adjusted, nonfarm jobs with the largest increases in the Professional and Business Services (+11,300). Additional job gains were seen in Manufacturing (+8,100); Education and Health Services (+7,300); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+6,800); Government (+6,300); Leisure and Hospitality (+2,500); Financial Activities (+600); and Other Services (+200).

Declines were reported in the Information (-400) and Construction (-200) sectors.

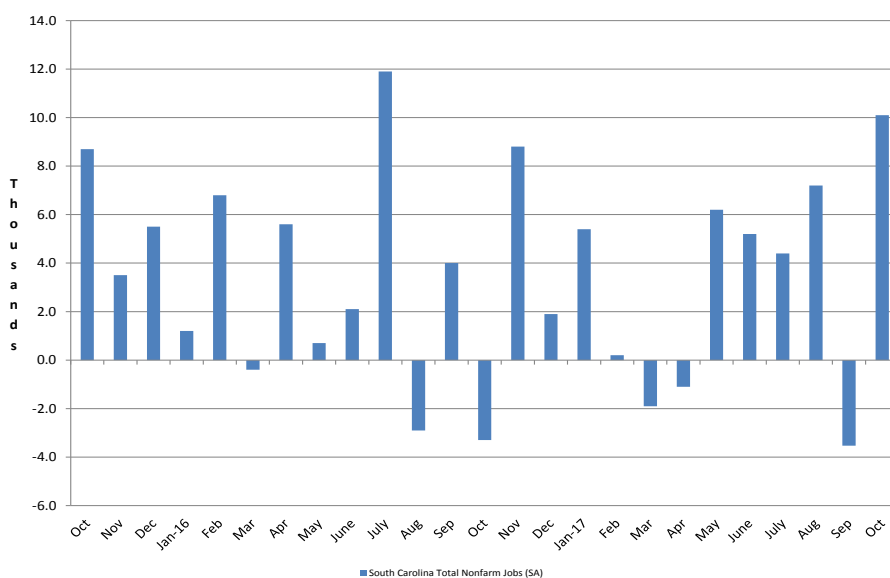
Metropolitan Statistical Areas, seasonally adjusted, total nonfarm payrolls saw over-the-month increases in Charleston (+2,900); Columbia (+2,400); Myrtle Beach (+1,500); and Sumter (+300). The most significant job loss was reported in Spartanburg (-1,400), followed by Florence (-400) and Greenville (-200).

Over the year, all Metropolitan Statistical Areas saw a surge in seasonally adjusted payroll.

**South Carolina Job Changes by Industry
October 2016 - October 2017 (SA)**



**SC Total Nonfarm Jobs
2015 - 2017**



Economic Indicators (October 2017)

Top Job Growth by MSA (SA)

	Over Month % Change	Over Year % Change
Charleston MSA	0.81%	2.32%
Sumter MSA	0.77%	0.00%
Columbia MSA	0.61%	0.86%
Greenville MSA	-0.05%	1.22%

To see the monthly not seasonally adjusted data series, go to

www.SCWorkforceInfo.com

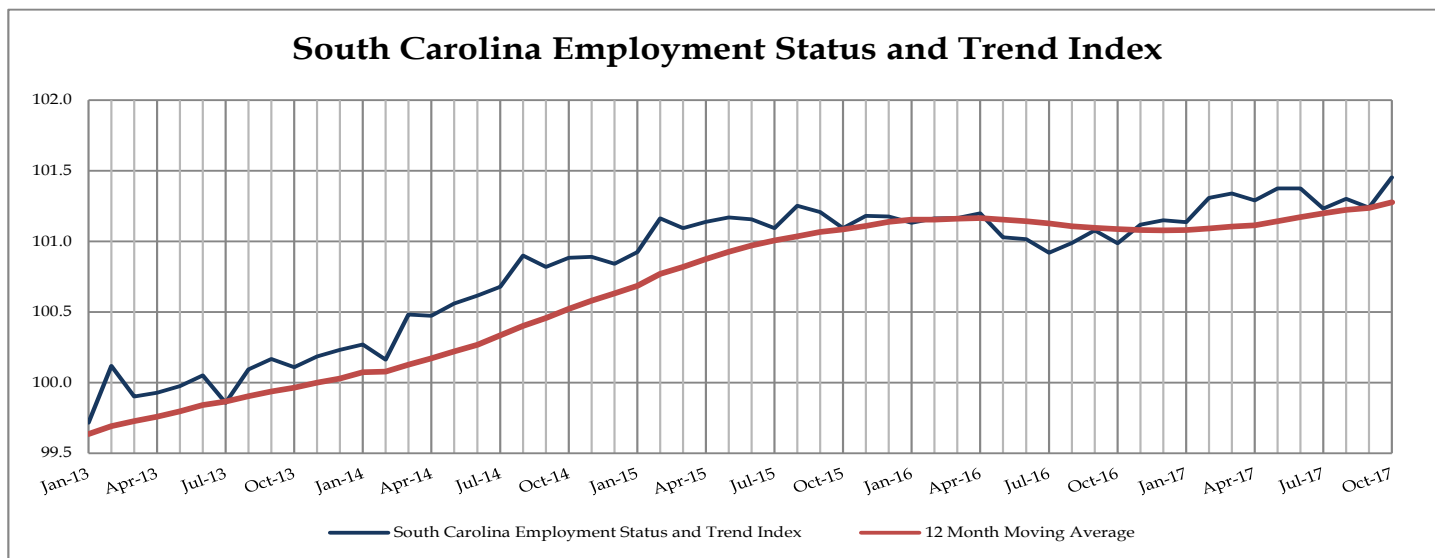
(Employment and Wage Data section)

Employment Changes by County

August 2017 through October 2017

County	Employment			Net Change From	
	Oct 2017	Sep 2017	Aug 2017	Sep '17 - Oct '17	Aug '17 - Sep '17
Abbeville	10,081	10,070	10,016	11	54
Aiken	72,532	72,909	73,231	-377	-322
Allendale	2,510	2,524	2,546	-14	-22
Anderson	86,716	86,930	86,444	-214	486
Bamberg	4,939	4,952	4,970	-13	-18
Barnwell	7,992	8,006	8,013	-14	-7
Beaufort	69,700	70,542	72,394	-842	-1,852
Berkeley	93,607	93,666	93,642	-59	24
Calhoun	6,548	6,586	6,590	-38	-4
Charleston	199,536	199,873	199,853	-337	20
Cherokee	22,897	22,908	22,775	-11	133
Chester	13,148	13,149	13,125	-1	24
Chesterfield	21,437	21,499	21,497	-62	2
Clarendon	12,338	12,381	12,431	-43	-50
Colleton	16,621	16,654	16,640	-33	14
Darlington	28,483	28,797	28,837	-314	-40
Dillon	12,315	12,378	12,426	-63	-48
Dorchester	72,782	72,849	72,847	-67	2
Edgefield	10,360	10,448	10,531	-88	-83
Fairfield	9,444	9,485	9,478	-41	7
Florence	62,812	63,422	63,332	-610	90
Georgetown	24,578	24,747	24,901	-169	-154
Greenville	239,409	239,934	238,514	-525	1,420
Greenwood	30,602	30,575	30,460	27	115
Hampton	7,927	7,994	8,118	-67	-124
Horry	133,205	136,370	140,051	-3,165	-3,681
Jasper	11,515	11,682	11,974	-167	-292
Kershaw	27,901	28,014	27,987	-113	27
Lancaster	36,697	36,700	36,610	-3	90
Laurens	29,283	29,385	29,252	-102	133
Lee	6,152	6,184	6,210	-32	-26
Lexington	142,023	142,498	142,193	-475	305
McCormick	3,321	3,323	3,316	-2	7
Marion	11,914	12,005	12,071	-91	-66
Marlboro	8,780	8,773	8,755	7	18
Newberry	18,564	18,642	18,714	-78	-72
Oconee	33,731	33,761	33,675	-30	86
Orangeburg	33,431	33,467	33,437	-36	30
Pickens	54,759	54,894	54,565	-135	329
Richland	192,801	193,160	192,450	-359	710
Saluda	8,461	8,570	8,665	-109	-95
Spartanburg	139,365	140,576	139,443	-1,211	1,133
Sumter	41,515	41,572	41,824	-57	-252
Union	11,242	11,343	11,253	-101	90
Williamsburg	11,996	12,025	12,027	-29	-2
York	127,912	127,836	127,380	76	456

South Carolina Employment Status and Trend Index Sets Record High



The S.C. Employment Status and Trend Index (SCESTI), an aggregate of five labor-market indicators, rose to an all-time high in October 2017, climbing to 101.45 from a September revised value of 101.24. The Index leapt over its 12-month moving average, which also set an all-time record at 101.28, an increase of four-hundredths of a point from September.

Four of the five underlying labor-market components moved in a positive direction in October. The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index rose by 5.3 points from September's revised value of 120.6 to 125.9 in October, the highest level since December 2000. The Conference Board's Employment Trends Index climbed sharply in October to 135.57 points from a September revised value of 132.86. The Conference Board's Help Wanted Online data, which tracks the number of available job openings posted online, increased by 1,994 in October to 57,189 from 55,195 in September. The Bureau of Labor Statistic's Weekly Manufacturing Hours data increased to an all-time high in production hours in October with 43.8 average hours per week from September's revised value of 43.5 average hours per week. Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance increased from a September average of 2,238 per week to an October average of 2,294 per week.

SCESTI has increased from its year-ago value of 100.99 in October 2016. With the Index rising above its 12-month moving average, this signifies a positive direction for employment change over the next several months.

Manufacturing: Dinosaur or Dynasty

The history of manufacturing is plagued with prosperity and poverty. It is viewed as the dinosaur of all industries. Like the dinosaur, machinery is outdated and dilapidated; manpower is aging and being replaced by robots. One could say manufacturing is a dying breed. But let's not be so swift to count it out. In recent years, manufacturing has rebounded. Technological advances and a new willingness to produce goods sparked new life into the industry.

Manufacturing rose out of a necessity to mass produce products to meet the demand for those products. Since the late 19th century through the 20th century, our economy has spawned car manufacturers, war missiles, equipment manufacturers, airplane producers, clothing manufacturers and nuclear energy producers. In order to keep up with progress, technology was introduced which required advanced degrees. However, most candidates with advanced degrees sought careers in other industries, leaving manufacturing to seek alternative solutions to their deficits. With the introduction of on-the-job training, educational requirements remain minimal and allow for advancement for those who otherwise would not qualify for the higher paying jobs. Sewing machine operators, team assemblers, computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers and nuclear power reactor operators are a few occupations that depict the diversity within the manufacturing industry.

Sewing Machine Operators operate or tend sewing machines to join, reinforce, decorate or perform related sewing operations in the manufacture of garment or nongarment products. On average, they make \$22,770 per year in South Carolina statewide.

Team Assemblers work as part of a team having responsibility for assembling an entire product or component of a product. Team assemblers can perform all tasks conducted by the team in the assembly process and rotate through all or most of them rather than being assigned to a specific task on a permanent basis. They may participate in making management decisions affecting the work. This occupation includes team leaders who work as part of the team. Assemblers who continuously perform the same task are classified elsewhere in 51-2000. Statewide they make \$33,000 per year.

Computer Numerically Controlled (CNC) Machine Tool Programmers develop programs to control machining or processing of metal or plastic parts by automatic machine tools, equipment or systems. In South Carolina, they make \$51,250 per year.

Nuclear Power Reactor Operators operate or control nuclear reactors. They move control rods, start and stop equipment, monitor and adjust controls and record data in logs. They also implement emergency procedures when needed. They may respond to abnormalities, determine cause and recommend corrective action. They make \$81,040 per year statewide.

Cross examination of sewing machine operators, team assemblers, computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers and nuclear power reactor operators show the wide ranging skills and abilities and wages paid to sustain growth and competitiveness within the global market place as well as in South Carolina. Diversity continues to construct and uphold the dynasty that is manufacturing!